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Period 1

The History of Psychology (pg. 10-14) 2-Column Notes

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| **Questions/Comments/Reactions/Thoughts/etc…** | **A Brief History of Psychology** |
| · It’s amazing that psychology dates back to such a long time ago, but it’s basically like a brand new field.  · Why did it take us so long to start studying the field of psychology?  · I think I believe more of the empiricist way of thinking. I don’t think we know anything when we are born, and through our experiences, we are formed. I don’t necessarily agree with Plato’s views, but I can see where he’s coming from.    · I can’t believe how recent psychology is. It’s only slightly over 100 years old.  · I don’t think I would’ve been a good participant in Titchener’s laboratory. I tried the problem in Figure 1.4 (page 11), but it was very difficult to focus on only my conscious experience. It was hard to ignore what the figure was.  · Wundt and Titchener seem very interesting. I wouldn’t mind learning more about them.  · Psychology is a lot to take in at the beginning of the course. There are a lot of different beliefs. I think it’ll take me a while before I fully understand a lot of them.    · Movies are a great example of Gestalt psychology. The images of a movie are projected onto a screen at just the right rate, which give us the moving pictures.  · The movie example will be a great reminder for me. Remembering an example or a key fact will help me sort out all these different views by psychologists.  · A lot of these different views make a lot of sense to me. I don’t know which one I believe the strongest.    · I’m on the fence with this belief. I don’t really agree with this, but the more I think about it, the more I think that it is plausible. People do push things out of their head, and those memories could be haunting them.  · Whose ideas were the most universally accepted?    · None of the early psychologists seemed to agree with one another. Everyone is disagreeing with the beliefs on another psychologist.  · Understanding animals will help us better understand ourselves.    · I think studying animals is a great idea. Humans and animals are so closely related. Studying animals can be very beneficial and it could help us better understand ourselves.  · Behaviorism is flawed, in my opinion. You can’t just study only observable behavior. You have to focus on consciousness, too.    · Psychology really has come full circle. With all the technology at our disposal, I’m eager to see what psychologists will be able to accomplish. | **Introduction**  · Psychology is a new science, but its origins can be traced back through centuries.  · Empiricism: the view that knowledge comes from experience and observation  · Plato and other philosophers from his time believed that some of what we know is present at birth.  · Empiricists, such as John Locke, believed that our minds are like a blank slate on which our experiences write a lifelong story.   **Wundt and the Structuralism of Titchener**  · Birth date of modern psychology = 1879  · 1879= the year that Wilhelm Wundt established the first formal psychology research lab  · Wundt’s goal was to use the methods of laboratory science to study consciousness.  · Consciousness: the awareness of external stimuli and our own mental activity  · Wilhelm Wundt wanted to describe the basic elements of consciousness, how they are organized and how they relate to one another.  · Wundt used introspection (“looking inward”) to study conscious experience.  · Edward Titchener’s approach was called structuralism because he was trying to define the structure of consciousness.  · Some other psychologists saw the work of structuralists as too simplistic.   **Gestalt Psychology**  · Max Wertheimer, Kurt Koffka, and Wolfgang Kohler were a part of a group that argued against the value of trying to break down human experience or consciousness into its component parts.  · They were called Gestalt psychologists. They said that the whole of conscious experience is not the same as the sum of its parts.  · Consciousness should be studied as a whole, not piece by piece.   **Freud and Psychoanalysis**  · Late 1880s à Sigmund Freud began to question the assumption that biological factors were behind all behavior and mental processes, including illnesses.  · He believed that the real cause of some people’s physical ailments was not physical but deep-seated problems that people had pushed out of consciousness.   **William James and Functionalism**  · Late 1870s à William James set up the first psychology laboratory in the United States  · 1883 à G. Stanley Hall established the first psychology research laboratory in the United States  · William James did not agree with the beliefs of Wundt or Titchener.  · James was influenced by Darwin’s theory of evolution, and he wanted to understand how the mind works in allowing an organism to adapt to the environment.   **John B. Watson and Behaviorism**  · Darwin’s theory of evolution led other psychologists to study animals as well as humans.  · Psychologists observed animal behavior in mazes and other experiments to learn about the animals’ conscious experiences.  · John B. Watson believed that the behavior of animals and humans was the most important source of information for psychology.  · The goals of behaviorism were to study only observable behavior and explain behavior via learning principles.   **Psychology Today**  · Many psychologists today are trying to study mental processes and watch the brain perform them. |
| **Reflection:** Psychology is still relatively new, but the origin of psychology goes back hundreds of year. Psychology is a very interesting field, because there are so many different views believed by different psychologists. There are many different beliefs, such as Gestalt psychology, psychoanalysis, functionalism, behaviorism, and structuralism. Even a topic such as consciousness results in a number of different beliefs from various psychologists, and the thing about these beliefs is that none of them are completely wrong. Each of them can be explained in some way that makes sense. It falls on each individual, as to which theory they believe. All of the theories by different psychologists were created to help us better understand ourselves. As technology improves, the sky’s the limit for psychologists. They are getting more tools at their disposal, as they try to study things such as mental processes. Psychology is such an interesting field, and the history of it is even more interesting. | |